

**Patsy Henry Butler, M.Ed., NCC**

School Counselor, Patrick Henry Middle School  
316 E. 32<sup>nd</sup> Street, Sioux Falls, SD 57105

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Trial Attorney Renata Hesse  
Antitrust Division  
U.S. Department of Justice  
Washington, DC 20530

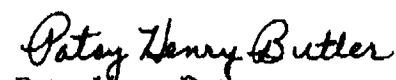
Dear Ms. Hesse:

I have served as a counselor for many years at Patrick Henry Middle School in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, where the neighborhood is financially well-to-do and where internet access at home is fairly common. As an educator and counselor, I am concerned with students in other parts of Sioux Falls and in South Dakota where incomes are low and children are disadvantaged when it comes to internet access, particularly outside of the school systems. For that reason, I am very pleased with the provisions in the Microsoft antitrust settlement which will target these kids and their schools for software and hardware support and enable them to compete with school systems all over the nation.

Microsoft Corporation has been a helpful partner in the development of information technologies in South Dakota's public schools. The state a few years ago began a program to make the state the "most wired state" per capita than any other state in the nation. Governor Janklow's "wiring the schools" program linked schools of all sizes and income types to the internet. Microsoft pitched in with a large grant to help the education portion of the comprehensive project. As a result, the settlement will be an additional advancement for the students whose schools have been wired for high-speed access.

My knowledge of the antitrust case is from the news media. What I have learned about the issues involved in the case seem to have been resolved in the settlement agreement. What is most important, I believe, is the fact that the issue of consumer harm was never established in this case, which makes me wonder why an antitrust issue was pursued so vigorously and for so long. It seems appropriate after all of this time and the taxes spent on this case that it has reached a settlement. I hope that the settlement is allowed to go through, and that schools and students will soon appreciate the benefits. Thank you very much for your attention.

Sincerely,

  
Patsy Henry Butler